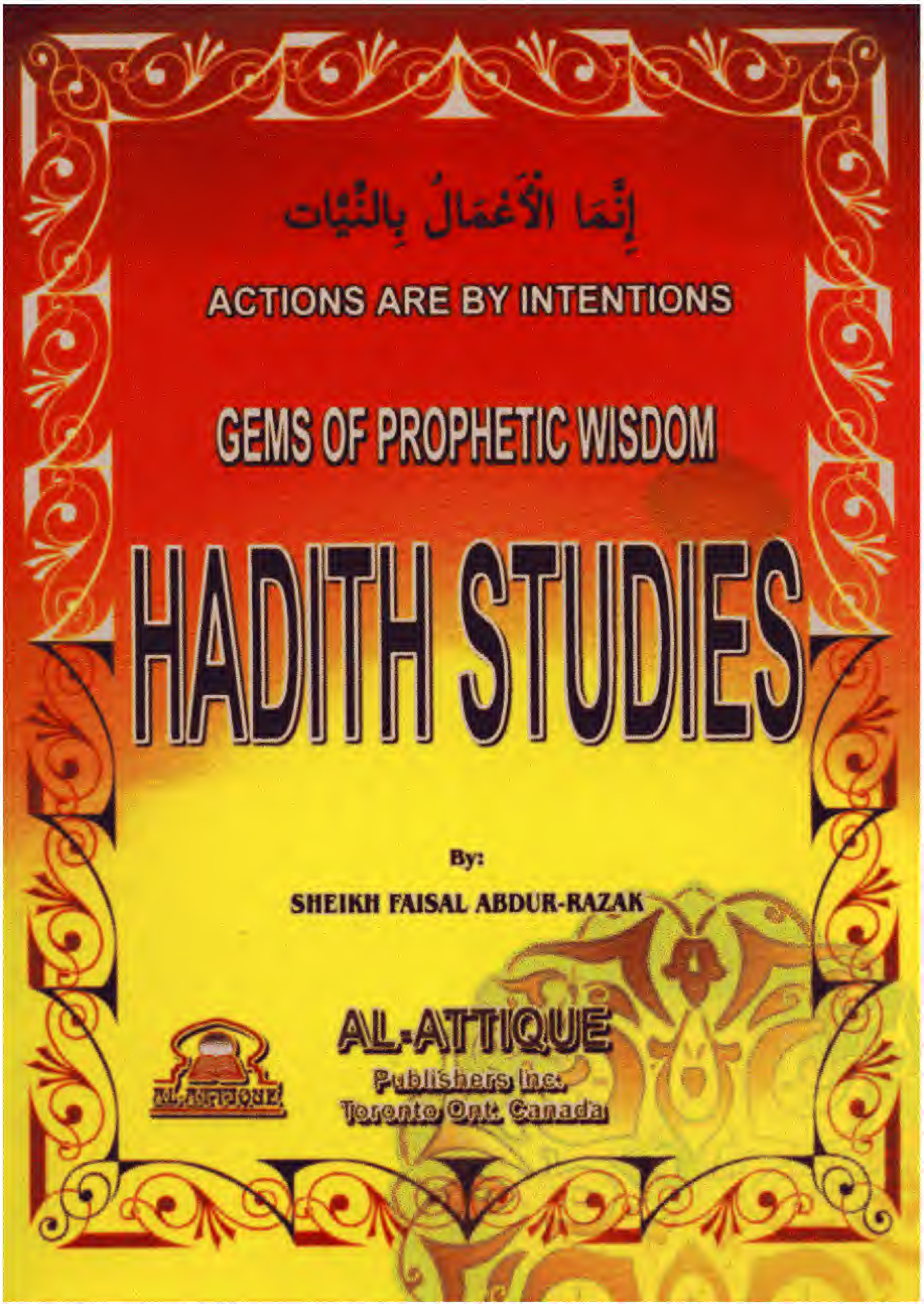

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SHEIKH FAISAL ABDUR-RAZAK
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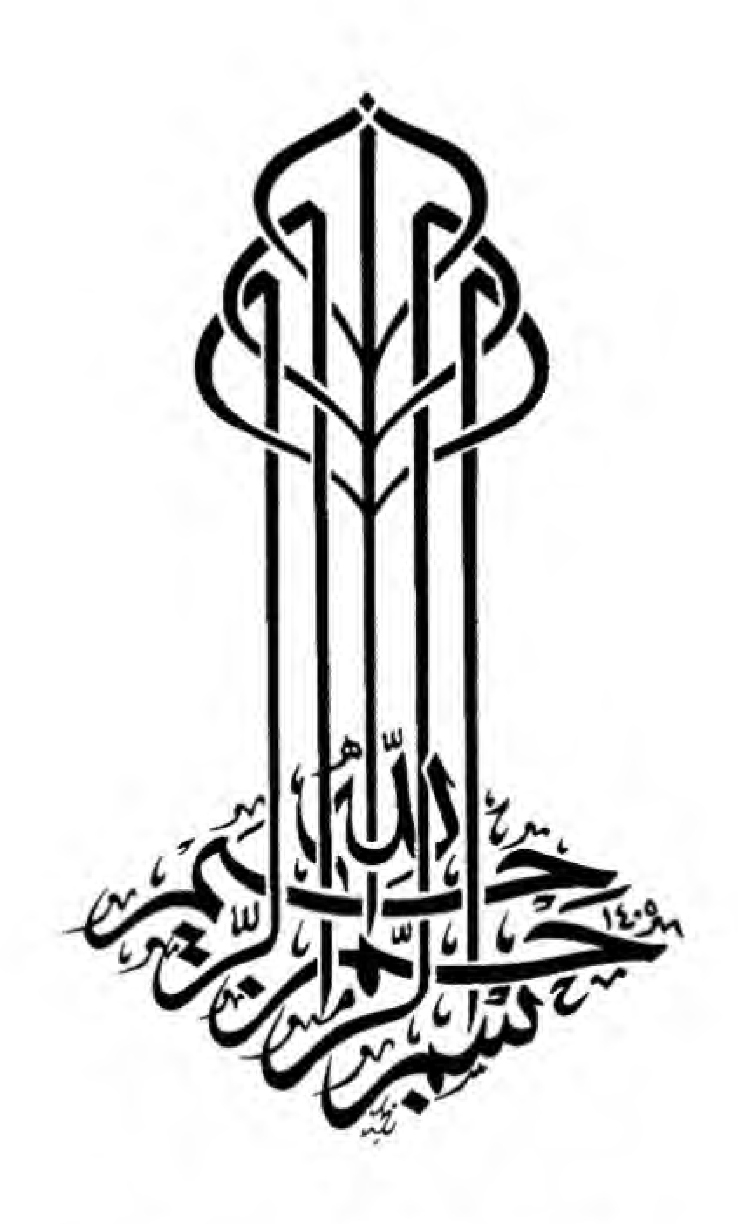
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In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This is great honour for us to publish this new book (**ACTION ARE BY INTENTION**) by Br. Faisal Abdur Razak.

Sheikh Faisal lives in Toronto , Canada. From 1977 to 1986 he studied in Saudi Arabia, first at Umm Al-Qurra University in Makkah, then at King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah. He also studied at York University, Toronto, Canada.

After completing his studies in Saudi Arabiain 1986, he returned to Canada where he became actively involved in Islamic Da'wah and education. He is Serving in the capacity of Imam of Taric Islamic Centre Toronto.

Sheikh Faisal is a member of the Federal Interfaith Committee of Canada, and the president of the Islamic Forum of Canada, and also the Vice-President of the Al-Shura Muslim Consultative Council.

He has spoken on a wide range of Islamic topics to gatherings in many countries including: Canada, U.S.A., England, Pakistan, India, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Palestine, Trinidad, Barbados, and Guyana. He has to his credit more than one hundred titles recorded on Audio and Video Cassettes, and many books including this book.

May Allah (SWT) bless our honourable brother sheikh Faisal with good reward and make this book useful.

Only from Allah (SWT) we seek help and only from Allah (SWT) we seek power and ability to do our duty.

Your brother in Islam.

M.R. Attique

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Nov. 03,1998

ARABIC TEXT OF HADITH

اَلْحَدِيْثُ الأَوَّلُ

عَنْ أَمِيْرِ الْمُؤمِنِيْنَ أَبِيْ حَفْصٍ عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ رَضِيَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ : سَمِعْتُ رَسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّمَ يَقُوْلُ :

« إِنَّمَا الأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ وَإِنَّمَا لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مَا نَوَى ، فَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى اللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهِ فَهِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى اللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهِ ، وَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتُهُ لِدُنْيَا يُصِيْبُهَا أَوِ امْرَأَةٍ يَنْكِحُهَا فَهِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى مَا هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِ » [مُتَّفَقٌ عَلَيْهِ] .

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

TRANSLITERATION

'AN AMIIRIL MU'MINIINA ABII HAFSIN 'UMAR-AB-NIL KHAT-TAABI RADI-YAL-LAAHU 'ANHU QAALA : SAMI'TU RASUU-LAL-LAAHI SAL-LAL-LAAHU 'ALAYHI WA SALLAMA YAQUUL :

IN-NAMAL- A'A-MAALU BIN- NIY-YAATI WA INNAMAA LI-KUL-LIM- RI- IM MAA NAWAA, FA-MAN KAANAT HIJRATUHU ILAL-LAAHI WA RASUULIHI FA-HIJRATUHU ILAL-LAAHI WA RASUULIHI, WA-MAN KAANAT HIJRATUHU LI-DUNYAA YUSIIBUHAA A-WIM- RA-A-TIN YAN-KIHUHAA, FA-HIJRATUHU ILAA MAA HAAJARA ILAYHI [MUTTAFAQUN 'ALAYHI]

TRANSLATION

On the authority of the Commander of the Faithful, Abu Hafs 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattaab, (May Allah be pleased with him), who said : I heard the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) say :

"Actions are (judged) according to intentions and every man shall have that which he intended. Thus he whose migration was for Allah and His Messenger, his migration was for Allah and His Messenger. And he whose migration was to achieve some worldly benefit or to take some woman in marriage, his migration was for that for which he migrated."

[Agreed upon : Reported by Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim]

VOCABULARY REFERENCE

إِنَّما =

But, But then; Yet, However; Rather, On the contrary.

إِنَّ =

Verily, Truly;
[Intensifying Particle introducing a nominal Clause;
In most cases it is not translated in English]

الأَعْمَالُ =

The actions;

عَمَلٌ =

Action, Doing, Activity, Acting; Work, Labour;
Course of action, way of acting, practice;
Achievement, Accomplishment.

بِالنِّيَّاتِ =

By intentions.

بِ =

By, According to; In, At, On; (w.r.t place and time)
With; (Indicating connection, asociation, or attendance)
For; (meaning: at the price of)
By; (meaning: to the amount of).

نِيَّاتٌ =

Intentions; (Plural)

نِيَّةٌ =

Intention; (Singular)
Intent, Design, Purpose, Plan, Scheme;
Determination, Will, Volition, Direction of will;
Tendency, Inclination, Desire.

وَ =

And; (Conjunction)

لِكُلٍّ =

For every.

لِ =

[Preposition]
For; Due to, Owing to; On behalf of, For the sake of.

كُلٍّ =

Everyone, Each one, Anyone;
Totality, Entirety.

اِمْرِئٍ =

Person, Man, Human being;
[used frequently in english for "one", as in "someone"]

مَا =

[relative pronoun]
What, That which; Something which;
Whatever, All that;

نَوَى =

To intend; He intended.

فَمَنْ =

Thus the one who;

فَ =

[conjunction]
Thus, Hence, Therefore; Then, And then; For, Because.

مَن =

[relative pronoun]

Who, The one who; Everyone who; Those who; Whoever; Whosoever;

كَانَتْ =

[Feminine of KAANA كان]

كَانَ =

To be;
To exist, To take place, To occur, To happen.

هِجْرَةٌ =

Hijrah, Migration; Departure, Exit;
Emigration from (some place); Immigration to (some place).

هِجْرَتُهُ =

His migration;

إِلَى =

[preposition]
To; Toward; Up to, as far as; Till, Until.

اللهِ =

ALLAH;

رَسُولِه =

His Messenger;

لِدُنْيا =

For the world;

دُنْيَا =

World; Earth; This world; Life in this world;
Worldly existence; Temporal things or possessions.

أَصَابَ / يُصِيْبُ =

To befall (someone); To allot (something to someone); To happen (to someone); To bestow upon (someone).

أَوِ

Or;

اِمْرَأَةٌ =

Woman;

نَكَحَ =

To marry; To get married.

يَنْكِحُهَا =

He marries her; He gets married to her.

هَاجَرَ =

To emigrate;

إِلَيْهِ =

To it;

مُتَّفَقٌ عَلَيْهِ =

Agreed upon;
[Reported by Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim]

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

HADITH REFERENCE

* Imam Al-Bukhari (R.A.) reported this hadith in his Sahih, placing it at the beginning of the most authentic collection of hadith, AL-JAAMI' ASSAHIH. He also reported it in Kitaab Al-Iman and several other places in the SAHIH AL-BUKHARI.
* Imam Muslim (R.A.) reported this hadith in his collection , Sahih Muslim, in Kitaab Al-Imaarah, Bab Innamal A'amaalu Bin Niyyaati, hadith # 1907
* Imam Abu Dawuud (R.A.) reported this hadith in Kitaab Al-Talaaq, hadith # 2201.
* Imam Al-Tirmidhi (R.A.)reported this hadith in Kitaab Fadaa-il Al-Jihad, hadith # 1646.
* Imam Ibn Maajah (R.A.) reported this hadith in Kitaab Az-Zuhd, Bab An-Niyyah, hadith # 4227.
* Imam An-Nasaa-ee (R.A.) reported this hadith in Kitaab Al-Tahaarah, Bab An-Niyyah Fil - Wudu, V1, # 59, 60.
* Imam Ahmad (R.A.) reported this hadith in his Musnad, V1, hadith # 25 and 43.
* This hadith is also reported by Al-Bayhaqi, Ibn Hibban and Ad-Daar Qutni.



IMPORTANCE OF THE HADITH

* This hadith is a very important hadith and it is from among the comprehensive words of the Holy Prophet ﷺ
* It represents a fundamental aspect of the Religion of Islam and most of the Islamic rulings are related to this hadith. It forms a pivot for the Deen.
* The sayings of the scholars of Islam clearly indicate this point.
* Imam Abu Dawuud (R.A) said : Verily this hadith Innamal A'amaalu Bin Niyyaati - is half of Islam. For the Deen can be divided into two categories, the External which is Actions, and the Internal which is intention or Niyyah.
* Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (R.A) said : One third of knowledge is contained in this hadith .
* Imam Ash-Shaafi'ee (R.A) said the same thing, i.e. one third of knowledge is contained in this hadith. This is so because the striving of a servant is done in three ways: with the heart, or, the tongue, or the limbs, And the Niyyah with the heart is one of these three categories.
* Because of this many scholars chose to start their books with this hadith.
* Imam Al-Bukhari (R.A.) placed this hadith at the beginning of his collection, Sahih Al-Bukhari.
* Imam An-Nawawi (R.A) placed this hadith at the beginning of his three famous books: RIYAAD ASSAALIHEEN, AL-ADHKAAR, and AL-ARBA'IIN AN-NAWAWIYYAH.
* The reason for this choice is to remind the student of knowledge to purify his/her intention, seeking only the pleasure of Almighty allah in the pursuit of knowledge and the doing of good deeds.

* Among the indicators of the importance of this hadith is what Imam Al-bukhari reported that the Holy Prophet (SAAW) delivered a khutbah on this hadith.

* Abu Ubayd (R.A.) said: There is no hadith which is more comprehensive richer in virtue, or greater in benefit than this hadith.

And Allah knows best.

REASON FOR THE NARRATION :

Imam At-Tabaraani reports in his AL-MU'JAM AL-KABIR, on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Mas'uud (R.A.) who said: " There was a man amongst us who was engaged to a woman known as Umm Qays. She refused to marry him until he migrated from Makkah to Madinah. So he migrated in order to marry her, and they got married (in Madinah). We used to refer to him as Muhaajir Umm Qays." (Quoted in Al-Futuuhaat Ar-Rabbaaniyyah, 1:60).

LESSONS DERIVED FROM THE HADITH :

1. IMPORTANCE OF NIYYAH
2. THE TIME AND PLACE OF NIYYAH
3. THE OBLIGATION OF HIJRAH
4. THE REWARDS OF NIYYAH
5. SINCERITY IN INTENTION AND ACTION
6. ALL OUR ACTIONS SHOULD BE ACTS OF WORSHIP OR IBAADAH.

1. IMPORTANCE OF NIYYAH

The scholars agree, by consensus, that no action is complete without the proper niyyah or intention.

In the prescribed ' Ibaadaat or acts of worship, such as Salaah, Hajj and Siyaam, nniyyah is a pillar or Rukn, and these acts of worship are not correct without the roper niyyah.

As for those actions which are a means for the performance of the aforementioned acts of worship, such as Wudu' and Ghusl, the Hanafi scholars said that niyyah is a Condition of Completeness (Shartul Kamaal) for the action to be accepted and rewarded. The Shaafi'ee scholars said niyyah is a Condition of Correctness (Shartu Sihhah) for the acceptance of this type of 'Ibaadah.

2. THE TIME AND PLACE OF NIYYAH

The time of Nayyah is just prior to the beginning of the action , such as the Takbeeratul Thraam for Salaah, or the Ihraam of Hajj or 'Umrah.

The place of Niyyah is the heart, thus it is not essential to verbalize the Niyyah. But it is desirable (Mustahab) to say it with the tongue to clarify and crystallize the Niyyah in the heart. The Niyyah specifies a particular act of worship and distinguishes it from another act of worship.

3. THE OBLIGATION OF HIJRAH

Hijrah or migration from the land of unbelievers to the land of Islam is obligatory on the Muslim who is unable to practice his religion in that place.

This ruling (HUKM) is perpetual without any conditions. With respect to the hadith which states, there is no hijrah after the Fath or Victory, this means that there is no hijrah from Makkah after it was conquered by the Muslims and became Daarul Islam or the land of Islam.

Another shade of meaning of hijrah is to " Migrate" form what Allah has prohibited. Thus the "Muhaajir" in this sense is the person who moves away or migrate from what Allah prohibited.

4. THE REWARDS OF NIYYAH

If a servant makes and intention to do a good deed, but is prevented from so doing because circumstances beyond

his control, such as sickness or death, then he is rewarded based on his intention.

Imam Al-Baydaawi (R.A) said : " Actions without intention are not correct, while intention (niyyah) without action may be rewarded. " The relationship of niyyah to action is as the soul to the body. there is no existence of the body without the soul. And there is no soul in this world without attachment to a body.

5. SINCERITY IN INTENTION AND ACTION

It is important to have IKHLAAS or sincerity in all actions in order to receive the rewards in the hereafter, and success in this world.

6. ALL OUR ACTIONS SHOULD BE ACTS OF WORSHIP OR ' IBAADAH

Any action Which is beneficial and good, with correct intention, and sincerity, and done to gain the pleasure of Almighty Allah, becomes an act of worship or 'Ibaadah and is rewarded accordingly.



COMMENTARY

[THIS SECTION IS ADAPTED FROM THE COMMENTARIES OF IMAM ABU HAMID AL-GHAZALI, IMAM IBN RAJAB AL-HANBALI, IMAM NAWAWI IMAM IBN AL-QAYYIM AL-JAWZIYYAH, and many other scholars as well.]

It is related from the Commander of the Believers Abu Hafs 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattaab (may Allah be pleased with him), who said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) say :

"Actions are (judged) according to intentions, and to every man shall have what he intended.

Thus whoever migrated for Allah and His Messenger, his migration was for Allah and His Messenger.

And he whose migration was to achieve some worldly benefit or to marry a woman, then his migration was for what he migrated."

This beautiful hadith was reported by the two Imams of hadith: Abu 'Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Isma'il Ibn Ibrahim Ibn Al-Mughira Ibn Bardizbah AL-BUKHARI, and Abul Husayn MUSLIM Ibn Al-Hajjaj Ibn Muslim Al-Qushayri An-Naysaaburi, in their two collections of SAHIH HADITH which are the most authentic of all hadith compilations.

INNAMAL A'AMAALU BIN- NIYYAAT

The hadith indicates that the intention is a yardstick for making one's actions sound. Only insofar as the intention is correct is the action correct, and insofar as the intention is wrong the action is wrong.

If an action takes place and an intention accompanies it, such action is characterized by one of the following three states:

a) It is performed out of fear of Allah the Exalted: this is the worship of slaves ('AABID).

b) It is performed in the pursuit of the Garden of Paradise and the pursuit of reward: this is the worship of traders (TUJJAAR).

c) It is performed out of shame before Allah and in order to fulfill the duty of servanthood and give thanks while one sees oneself remiss despite doing all this, fearing in his heart because he does not know – even then – if his action is accepted or not: this is the worship of free men (AHRAAR).

[This threefold definition of the states of the intention is attributed to the scholar Ma'ruuf Al-Karkhi (d. 200AH/815) by Shaykh 'Abdur Rahman As-Sufuri in his book "Nuzhatul Majaalis".

The Messenger ﷺ of Allah alluded to the latter when 'A'isha -- may Allah be well pleased with her -- upon seeing

him spend the night standing in prayer until his feet were swollen, asked him:

"O Messenger of Allah, why do you place such a burden on yourself when Allah has forgiven you all your sins past and those to come?" He replied: "Should I not be a thankful servant?"

[This hadith is reported by Imam Muslim, Bab Al-Munaafiquun #79, and by Imam ATirmidhi, Kitaab As-Salaah #197]

With respect to the question: what is best, to worship with fear or to worship with hope?, Imam Al-Ghazali said :

"To worship with hope is better because hope gives rise to love, while fear gives rise to despair."

The above three stages or divisions are with respect to the sincere. Know that sincerity may find in its way the bane of pride. Whoever admires his works, his works have failed, and similarly whoever waxes proud, his works have failed.

This is one of the dangerous characteristics of Iblis that believers should be careful about.

The second state is when one acts in the pursuit of both a worldly benefit and the hereafter. It is the opinion of some of the scholars that the works of such a person are not accepted. Their proof for this is the Hadith Qudsi or sacred tradition wherein Almighty Allah says: "I am the most sufficient of partners. Whoever does an action in which he associates with a partner other than Myself, I have nothing to do with him."

[This hadith is reported by Imam Muslim, Kitaab Az-Zuhd #46, and by Imam Ibn Maajah, Kitaab Az-Zuhd #45]

This is the position of Al-Harith Al-Muhaasibi as

mentioned in "Kitaab Ar-Ri'aaya Li Huquuqillaah" [Book of the Observance of Allah's Rights] in which he says: "Sincerity is to seek Allah through obeying Him, without seeking other than Him."

[Al-Muhaasibi's full name is Abu 'Abdullah Al-Harith Al-Muhaasibi Al-'Anazi (d. 243AH/857). He was an early scholar of Baghdad and a Shafi'i jurist. He was one of the teachers of Sheikh Al-Junayd. Imam An-Nawawi quotes him frequently in his writings.]

Making display or showing-off one's actions (RIYAA') is of two kinds:

The first is when one seeks none other than the people in his obedience of Allah;

The second is when one seeks the people and the Lord of people at the same time. Both kinds bring one's works to nothing. This definition of riyaa' is conveyed by the scholar of hadith Abu Nu'aym in Hilyatul Awliya' [The Adornment of Allah's Friends] from some of the Predecessors (As-Salaf As-Saalih). Some scholars have also adduced a proof for this from what Almighty Allah says:

> "*The Compeller, the Sublime, Glory be to Allah above what they associate!*" *(59:23)*.

Just as He is above taking a wife or a son or a partner, so is He above accepting an action in which another besides Him is taken as a partner. Allah the Exalted is greater than that, and He is All-Glorious, and He is All-Sublime.

Al-Samarqandi said: "All that one does for the sake of Allah the Exalted is accepted, and all one does for the sake of people is rejected." An illustration for this is the person who performs the noon-prayer, for example, intending thereby to fulfill the obligation imposed on him by Allah the Exalted, except that he makes its integrals and suras long

and he beautifies its appearance for the sake of people: the root of the prayer is accepted, but its length and beauty are not because he intended them for the sake of people.

[Imam As-Samarkandi is Abul-Layth Mudar Naasir Ibn Muhammad As-Samarqandi (d. 373AH/983). He was a scholar of Tasawwuf and jurist of the Hanafi school. He authored many works, including a "Tafsir" (Commentary on Qur'an), "An-Nawaazil," and also "Tanbiih Al-Ghafiliin" (A Warning to the Heedless), "Bustaanul 'Aarifiin" (The Garden of the Gnostics), and "Muqaddimah Fis-Salaah" (Introduction Regarding Prayer).

Sheikh 'Izzuddin Ibn 'Abdus-Salaam was asked about the person who lengthens his prayer for the sake of people. He said: "I hope this particular action of his does not fail if he attributed a partner to Allah in the manner of his prayer. However, if it happened at the root of his action -- that is, if he performed the obligatory prayer both for the sake of Almighty Allah and for the sake of the people -- then his prayer is definitely not accepted because he has ascribed a partner to Allah at the root of his action." [Sheikh 'Izzuddin is 'Abdul 'Aziz Ibn 'Abdul-Salaam Ibn Abul-Qaasim Ibn Al-Hasan 'Izzuddin As-Sulami of Damascus, (577-660AH / 1181-1262AD). He was nicknamed Sultan Al-'Ulamaa', the Sultan of Scholars. He was a Shafi'i jurist, a scholar of Tasawwuf, and a contemporary of Imam An-Nawawi.]

Making display in one's actions can also be in the omission of an action. Imam Al-Fudayl Ibn 'Iyad said: "To leave an action for the sake of people is making display, and to perform an action for the sake of people is attributing a partner to Allah. Sincerity is that Allah exempt you from both." The meaning of his words -- may Allah the Exalted have mercy on him -- is that whoever resolves to do an act of worship and then leaves it for fear that people should see it, he is making display because he left an action for the sake of people. However, if he leaves it in order to pray it in seclusion (khalwa): this is recommended, except if it is an

obligatory prayer or the obligatory poor-tax, or if he is a scholar whom people take as an example. In such cases making one's worship public is preferable.

[Imam Al-Fudayl : His full name is Abu 'Ali Al-Fudayl Ibn 'Iyad As-Samarqandi (d. 187AH / 803AD). He was an early scholar of Tasawwuf and a hadith scholar in Kufa. He died in Makkah. He was student of Hasan al-Basri's successor 'Abdul Wahid ibn Zayd, and a teacher of Sheikh Ibrahim Al-Adham.]

Like making display in one's actions, talking about it also voids the action. This consists in performing devotions in seclusion and then telling people about it. The Prophet ﷺ said :

> "*Whoever advertises himself, Allah will advertise him, and whoever conceals himself, Allah will conceal him.*"

[Reported by Imam Al-Bukhari, "Riqaaq" #36; Imam Muslim, "Ahkaam" #9 and "Zuhd" #47-48, Imam At-Tirmidhi, "Nikaah" #11 and "Zuhd" #48; Imam Ahmad, 3:40, 5:45; Ad-Daarimi, "Riqaaq" #35.]

The scholars said: "If he is a scholar whose example is followed and he mentions this in order to stir the listeners to action, there is no objection to it."

Al-Marzubani said – may Allah the Exalted have mercy on him: "The worshipper needs four qualities for his prayer to be carried up:

a) presence of heart (HUDUUR AL-QALB);

b) full sight of the mind (SHUHUUD AL-'AQL);

c) complete submission to the requirements of the prayer (KHUDUU' AL-ARKAAN);

d) humility in the limbs of the body (KHUSHU' AL-JAWAARIH).

Whoever prays without presence of heart is a worshipper at play, and whoever prays without full presence of the mind is a heedless worshipper, and whoever prays without complete submission of the limbs is worshipping incorrectly. But whoever prays with the above four principles is a complete and loyal worshipper."

[Sheikh Al-Marzubaani: He is Muhammad Ibn 'Umran Ibn Musa Ibn Sa'id Ibn 'Ubaydullaah Al-Marzubaani (296-384 AH / 909-994 AD). He was a hadith scholar, poet, philologist, and literary historian.]

By saying "Actions are only according to intentions," the Prophet ﷺ meant acts of obedience to the exclusion of permitted actions that are neither recommended nor disliked. Al-Harith Al-Muhaasibi said: "Sincerity has no part in actions which are neither recommended nor disliked, because they neither imply nor lead to drawing near to Allah." For example constructions which do not serve a particular need, but are for the sake of frivolity. However, if they serve a need such as mosques, bridges, and forts, then they are recommended.

Al-Muhaasibi continued: "There is no sincerity in a forbidden action nor in a disliked one, as in the case of someone who looks at something which is forbidden for him to look at, claiming that he only looks in order to reflect upon Allah's handiwork." An example is the person who gazes at a beardless young man: there is no sincerity in such a thing, nay there is no drawing near to Allah in it whatsoever.

Al-Muhaasibi continued: "Truthfulness (sidq) as an attribute of a servant of Allah, means evenness in the private and the public person, in visible and hidden behavior. Truthfulness is realized after the realization of all the stations (Maqaamaat) and states (Ahwaal). Even sincerity (ikhlas) is in need of truthfulness, whereas truthfulness needs nothing, because although real sincerity is to seek Allah through obedience, one might seek Allah

by praying and yet be heedless and absent in his heart while praying. Truthfulness, then, is to seek Almighty Allah by worshipping with complete presence of heart before Him. For every truthful one (Sadiq) is sincere (Mukhlis), while not every sincere one is truthful. That is the meaning of connection (Ittisaal) and disconnection (infisal): the truthful one has disconnected himself from all that is other-than-Allah (ma siwa Allah) and he has fastened himself to presence-before-Allah (al-hudur billah). That is also the meaning of renunciation (takhalli) of all that is other-than-Allah and self-adornment (tahalli) with presence-before- Allah, the Glorified, the Exalted."

By his word "actions" it is possible that the Prophet ﷺ meant the soundness of actions, or the correctness of actions, or the acceptance of actions by Allah, or the perfection of actions. The latter meaning is the one adopted by Al-Imam Abu Hanifa -- may Allah the Exalted have mercy on him.

Whatever is by way of eliminating something is not counted as one such action. For example: to remove filth from oneself, to resist force, to reject faults, to convey gifts, and other than that. The soundness of these actions is not dependent upon correcting one's intention; however, their reward is dependent upon the intention of drawing near to Allah. Thus whoever feeds his animal intending thereby obedience to Allah's order, he is rewarded, whereas if by feeding it he intends only to preserve his income, there is no reward. This is mentioned by Imam Al-Qarafi.

[Imam Al-Qarafi: He is Ahmad Ibn Idris As-Sanhaji Al-Qarafi (626/1228- 684/1285). He was a contemporary of Imam An-Nawawi and he was an Ash'ari jurist and hadith scholar].

Excepted from the latter case is the mount of the fighter in the way of Allah if he bridled it for that intention; if it drinks at a time he does not intend to give it drink, he will still obtain reward for it, as mentioned by Imam Al-Bukhari. [

Sahih Al-Bukhari, Kitaab Al-Jihad, #45]

Similarly in interacting with one's wife, closing the door, and extinguishing the lamps before sleep: if one intends by these acts obedience to Allah's order he will be rewarded, and if he intends something else, he will not.

Know that the word "intention" (niyyah) lexically means "purpose" or "meaning" (qasd). One says: "May Allah intend good for you," which means "May He mean good for you." Legally intention means to aim to do something and proceed to do it. If one aims to do something and then delays doing it, it is only a decision ('azm).

Intention was made a legal category in order to distinguish acts of habit from acts of worship and in order to distinguish the standing of one act of worship from that of another. An illustration of the former distinction is the act of sitting in a mosque: its purpose could be rest according to habit, or it could be worship with the intention of seclusion-and-devotion (i'tikaf). The distinguishing factor here between habit and worship is intention.

The Prophet -- Blessings and Peace of Allah be upon him -- pointed to this distinction in meaning when he was asked about a man who fights in order to be seen, another who fights in self-defense, and another who fights out of bravery: which of these is fighting in the way of Almighty Allah? He said: "Whoever fights in order that Allah's word prevail, he is fighting in the way of Allah the Exalted.

" [Bukhari, "'Ilm" #45, "Jihad" #15; Muslim, "Tawhid" #28, "Imara" #150-151, Tirmidhi, "Fada'il al-jihad" #15; Ibn Majah, "Jihad" #13; Ahmad 4:392, 398, 402, 417.]

An illustration of the latter distinction -- that is in the standing of one act of worship as opposed to another -- is someone who prays four cycles of prayer (rak'a): he could mean their enactment as a fulfillment of the obligatory Noon Prayer, and he could mean their enactment as a fulfillment of the voluntary Sunnah Prayer. What distin-

guishes between the two is the intention. It is the same with manumission. One may mean expiation by it and one may mean other than that, such as the fulfillment of a vow and so forth. Again what distinguishes between them is the intention.

The Prophet's saying ﷺ "To each only what he intended" is proof that proxy is not allowed in acts of worship nor is appointing a representative to formulate the same intention as oneself. The exception to this is in the distribution of the poor-tax (zakat) and the slaughtering of a sacrifice: it is permissible to appoint a proxy in both of these, for all of the intention, the slaughtering, and the distribution, even if one is able to make one's own intention. This is not permissible in the matter of pilgrimage and the repayment of a debt when one is able to make one's own intention.

Acts (other than worship) which can have but one interpretation do not stand in need of an intention; those that can have two (or more) do. For example, one who owes two thousand of which one thousand cover something given as a security (rahn); if, when he pays one thousand, he says: "Let this be the one thousand for which I gave a security," he is right. If he does not formulate such an intention during payment he can do so afterwards to whatever end he desires. The Shafi'e Madh-hab does not recognize the soundness of an intention made after the fact except in such a case.

MIGRATING TOWARDS ALLAH AND HIS MESSENGER ﷺ

On the Prophet's saying ﷺ: "Whoever emigrates towards Allah and His Messenger, his emigration is towards Allah and His Messenger; whoever emigrates for the attainment of a worldly goal or in order to marry a woman, then his emigration is only towards what he emigrated to":

The original meaning of emigration (muhajara) is

flight and abandonment. The term "hijrah" has several meanings:

1. The migration of the Companions – may Allah be well pleased with them – from Makkah to Abyssinia at the time the idolaters were persecuting Allah's Messenger ﷺ They escaped persecution and sought safety with the Negus. Bayhaqi said: "This hijrah took place five years after the beginning of the Message."

2. The second meaning of hijrah is the migration from Makkah to Madinah. This took place thirteen years after the beginning of the Message. It was an obligation for every Muslim in Makkah to emigrate towards the Messenger of Allah – Blessings and Peace of Allah be upon him – (ﷺ) in Madinah at that time.

A number of scholars said that the emigration was obligatory from Makkah to Madinah in absolute terms. In reality it was not obligatory in absolute terms for there was nothing special about Madinah at that time. The only obligation was to emigrate towards the Messenger ﷺ of Allah himself.

Ibn al-'Arabi said: "The scholars (may Allah be pleased with them) divide peregrination (Al-dhahaabu Fil-ard) into two kinds: the flight from something and the pursuit of something. [Ibn Al-'Arabi: He is Al-Qadi Abu Bakr Ibn Al-'Arabi Al-Andalusi (d.543AH / 1138AD). He was a Maliki jurist and hadith master.]

(i) The Flight from something is divided into six parts:

1. Exiting the Abode of War to enter the Abode of Islam. This kind of emigration endures until the Day of the Rising. The kind of emigration that ceased with the Conquest of Mekkah and to which the Prophet referred – Blessings and Peace of Allah be upon him – by saying: "There is no hijrah after the Conquest", is hijrah towards the Messenger of Allah wherever he was. [This hadith is reported by Al-Bukhari, "Manaqib Al-Ansar" #45, "Jihad" #1-2; At-Tirmidhi, "Siyar" #32; Ahmad 1:226, 266, 355, 469, 2:215, 3:22, 468, 5:187.]

2. Exiting the land of innovation. Ibn al-Qasim said: I heard Malik say: "It is not legally permissible for anyone to reside in a land in which the early generations (salaf) are reviled."" [Ibn Al-Qasim: He is Abu 'Abdullah 'Abdur-Rahman Ibn Al-Qasim Al-'Utaqi (d. 191AH / 806AD). He was Imam Malik's foremost disciple.]

3. Exiting a land in which forbidden matters are predominant; to pursue what is permissible is an absolute duty upon every Muslim.

4. Escaping bodily harm: it is a favor from Allah the Exalted whereby he grants a certain exemption. Therefore if someone fears for himself in a given place, Allah the Exalted has given him permission to exit from it and take flight in order to save himself from such peril. The first to practice such emigration is Abraham – Peace be upon him –

when he said: "Lo! I am a fugitive unto my Lord" (29:26). Almighty Allah said with regard to Moses: "So he escaped from thence, fearing, vigilant" (28:21).

5. Exiting out of fear of the disease prevalent in unhealthy regions towards a land untouched by it. The Prophet – Blessings and Peace of Allah be upon him – allowed this for the Banu 'Arin tribesmen who found the air of Madina unwholesome, and he permitted them to go out to the countryside. [It must be mentioned that the air of Madinah was by no means unwholesome of itself, since the Prophet (S) said that even the earth of Madinah contains healing. This was only with respect to these particular people. They turned out to be renegades and criminals. We mention the following hadith:

(a) Abu Qilaba said, Anas related to me, that some people came to the Prophet ﷺ and they spoke to him saying: "The climate of this land [Mad] does not suit us." The Prophet ﷺ said, "There are camels belonging to us, and they are to be taken out to the pasture. So take them out and drink of their "alban" (milk) and "abwal" (colostrum?)." So they took them and set out and drank of their "abwal" and "alban", and having recovered, they attacked the shepherd..." (Bukhari, Tafsir of 5:33; English vol. 6:107).

(b) Anas Ibn Malik reported that some people of the tribe of 'Ukl or 'Arina came to Allah's Messenger ﷺ at

Madinah, and they found its climate uncongenial. So Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) said to them: If you so like, you may go to the camels of Sadaqa and drink of their "alban" and "abwal". They did so and were all right. Then they fell upon the shepherds... (Muslim, Qasama 2:9-11; cf. English vol. 3:893-894).

(c) The hadith (in all its other versions) is also related by Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi, Nisa'i, and Ibn Maja. See also Ibn Sa'd, "Tabaqat" 2(1):67-68 and the books of Qur'anic commentary for 5:33 cf. Tabari, "Tafsir" (Cairo 1957 ed.)]

6. Exiting out of fear of harm in one's property, since the inviolability of a Muslim's property is like the inviolability of his blood.

(ii) The Pursuit of Something

As for the latter kind of peregrination -- the pursuit of something -- it is divided into ten parts; the first nine being the pursuit of religion and the last the pursuit of worldly goals:

1. Travel for admonitory or didactic purposes. Allah the Exalted said: "Have they not traveled in the land and seen the nature of the consequence of those who were before them?" (12:109) Dhu al-Qarnayn travelled the world in his quest to see its wonders.

2. Travel for the pilgrimage.

3. Travel for jihad.

4. Travel for livelihood.

5. Travel for trade and gain over and above the basic necessities of life. It is allowed in view of the saying of the Exalted: "It is no sin for you that you seek the bounty of your Lord" (2:198).

6. The pursuit of learning.

7. Going to see exalted sites. The Prophet said – Blessings and Peace of Allah be upon him: "Let no travel be undertaken except to three mosques."(19) [Bukhari, "Salat fi masjid Makka" #1-2, "Jaza' al-sayd" #26, "Sawm" #67; Abu Dawud, "Manasik" #94; Tirmidhi, "Mawaqit" #126; Ibn Majah, "Iqama" #196; Ahmad 2:501, 3:7, 34-35.]

8. Going to frontier ports in order to take up a military post there.

9. Visiting one's brothers-in-Allah. The Prophet ﷺ said: "A man visited one of his brothers in a certain village. Allah sent forth an angel to meet him on the way. The angel said: "What do you seek by travelling?" He replied: "I wish to see a brother of mine in this village." The angel said: "Do you owe him a favor which you are repaying him?" He replied: "No, I only love him for the sake of Allah the Exalted." The angel said: "I am Allah's Messenger sent to you to tell you that Allah loves you just as you love your brother." [Muslim, "Birr" 338; Ahmad 2:292, 408, 462, 508, 5:35.]

10. The pursuit of worldly goals.

OTHER MEANINGS OF HIJRAH

There are other meanings to which the word hijrah applies:

1. The emigration of the tribes towards Allah's Messenger ﷺ in order to learn their legal obligations and then return to their people and teach them.

2. The emigration of the Makkans who entered Islam and came to the Prophet ﷺ then returned to their people.

3. Emigration from the lands of disbelief to the lands of Islam. It is not permitted for a Muslim to reside in the Abode of Disbelief. Al-Mawardi(21) said: "If he comes to have family and relatives around him and he is able to display his religion, then it is no longer permissible for him to emigrate, because the place where he lives has become the Abode of Islam." [Al-Mawardi: He is 'Ali Ibn Muhammad Ibn Habib Abul-Hasan Al-Basri Al- Mawardi (364-450AH / 974-1058AD). One of the great Ash'ari Imams of the Shafi'i school, head of the judiciary in Baghdad at the time of the pious Abbasid Caliph Abu Ja'far 'Abdullah Al-Qa'im Bi Amrillaah. He published major works in Islamic jurisprudence, Quranic exegesis, principles of law, and literature, of which his work on the caliphal system of Islamic government "Al-Ahkam Al-Sultaniyya Wal-Wilayat Al-Diniyyah" [The rules of power and positions of religious authority] is still among the most professional available.]

4. A Muslim's emigration from his (Muslim) brother for longer than three days without legitimate reason. It is reprehensible during the first three days and forbidden after that unless caused by necessity. The story is told of a man who left his brother for more than three days. The latter wrote him these verses:

Sir, I need to complain to you of a certain injustice. You will find out its nature if you ask Ibn Abi Khaythama.

[Ibn Abi Khaythama: He is Ahmad Ibn Zuhayr Ibn Harb Ibn Abi Khaythama (185/801-279/892), a jurist and hadith scholar of the school of Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal.]

From his grandfather he narrates what Ad-Dahhak narrates from 'Ikrima, from Ibn 'Abbas, from al-Mustafa our Prophet sent with all-encompassing mercy:

"Verily the close friend's aloofness from his friend Beyond three days our Lord forbade!"

['Ikrima (d. 105/723), was an early hadith master who died in Madinah. He reported hadith from 'A'isha and Ibn 'Abbas, whose commentary on Qur'an he transmitted. See Nawawi's "Tahdhib" 431-432, Ibn Sa'd, "Tabaqat" 5:212, 'Abd al-Rahman Ibn Abu Hatim al-Razi, "Al-Jarh wat-ta'dil" 3:2:9, M.M. 'Azami, "Studies in Early Literature" 66, 77.]

5. A husband's emigration from his wife when her recalcitrance is ascertained. Allah the Exalted said: "Banish them to beds apart" (4:34). Of the same nature is the emigration away from habitual

sinners: not staying in the same place with them, not speaking to them, not responding to their greeting, and not initiating it.

6. Emigration away from all that Almighty Allah forbade, and this is the most comprehensive emigration.

FA MAN KAANAT HIJRATUHUU ILAL-LAAHI WA RASUULIHII

On the Prophet's saying: "Whoever emigrates towards Allah and His Messenger" -- that is, in his intention and proceeding-- his emigration is towards Allah and His Messenger" -- that is, in the eyes of the Law -- "whoever emigrates for the attainment of a worldly goal etc.": It is related that a man emigrated from Mecca to Madinah not because of a desire to obtain the merit of the hijrah but in order to marry a woman named Umm Qays. He was nicknamed "MUHAAJIR UMM QAYS - Umm Qays's Emigrant."

It may be said: "Marriage is one of the requirements of the Law, why then is it here considered a worldly pursuit?" The answer is: ostensibly he did not emigrate for her, but only for the hijrah towards the Prophet -- Blessings and Peace of Allah be upon him. Since what he hid was different from what he showed, he deserved rebuke and blame. An analogy for this is in the person who puts on an outward show of going on pilgrimage but his real goal is trade, or again the person who seems to travel for the sake of learning, when in reality he is lusting after a position of leadership or a governorship.

It follows from the Prophet's ﷺ saying "then his emigration is only towards what he emigrated to" that

there is no reward for one who, in his pilgrimage, undertakes trade and social visits. However, it is necessary to interpret the hadith to mean this only when the motivating factor for one's pilgrimage is trade. If one's motive is the pilgrimage, then he obtains reward, trade being subordinate to it. However, his reward is defective insofar as he did other than the pilgrimage he set out to do. If his motive is both trade and the pilgrimage, it is possible that he will obtain reward as his emigration was not entirely devoted to the world; and the contrary is also possible (i.e. he will not obtain reward) because he has mixed work for the hereafter with work for the world. However, the hadith determines the legal ruling concerning reward on the basis of unmitigated purpose. Therefore, whoever has a double purpose, it does not hold true of him that his pursuit was ona worldly one. And Almighty Allah knows best.



SINCERITY IN INTENTION AND ACTION

Sincerity is the freeing of one's intentions from all impurities in order to come nearer to Allah. It is to ensure that the intentions behind all acts of worship and obedience to Allah are exclusively for His pleasure. It is the perpetual contemplation of the Creator, to the extent that one forgets the creation.

Sincerity is a condition for Allah's acceptance of good deeds performed in accordance with the sunnah of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. Allah has commanded this in the Qur'an:

"And they have been commanded to worship only Allah, being sincere towards Him in their deen and true. (98:5)"

Abu Umama has related that a man once came to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and said, "What of a man who joined us in the fighting, his intention being for fame and booty?" The Prophet said, "He recieves nothing." The man repeated the question three times and each time the Prophet ﷺ said, "He receives nothing". Then he said, "Allah only accepts actions that are intended purely for His pleasure."

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri related that the Prophet ﷺ said in his khutba during the farewell pilgrimage, "Allah will bless whoever hears these words and whoever understands them, for it may be that those who pass on this knowledge are not those who will understand it the best. There are three things concerning which the heart of a believer should feel no enmity or malice: devoting one's actions to Allah, giving counsel to the Imams of the Muslims, and being loyal to the majority."

What is meant here is that these three things strengthen

the heart, and whoever distinguishes himself in them will have a heart purified from all manner of deceit, corruption and evil.

A servant can only free himself from shaytan through sincere devotion, for Allah tells us in the Qur'an that Iblis said to Him:

"Except those of Your servants who are sincere. (38:83)"

It has been related that a righteous man used to say, "O self, be devout and you will be pure." When any worldly fortune, in which the self finds comfort and towards which the heart inclines, intrudes upon our worship, then it impairs the purity of our efforts and ruins our sincerity. Man is preoccupied with his good fortune and immersed in his desires and appetites; rarely are his actions or acts of worship free of temporary objectives and desires of this kind. For this reason it has been said that whoever secures a single moment of pure devotion to Allah in his life will survive, for devotion is rare and precious, and cleansing the heart of its impurities is an exacting undertaking.

In fact, devotion is the purifying of the heart from all impurities, whether few or many, so that the intention of drawing nearer to Allah is freed from all other motives, except that of seeking His pleasure. This can only come from a lover of Allah, who is so absorbed in contemplation of the next world that there remains in his heart no place for the love of this world. Such a person must be devote and pure in all his actions, even in eating, drinking and answering the calls of nature. With rare exceptions, anyone who is not like this will find the door of devotion closed in his face.

The everyday actions of a person who is overwhelmed by his or her love for Allah and the Aakhirah are characterized by his love and they are, in fact, pure devotion. In the same

way, anyone whose soul is overwhelmed by love for and preoccupation with this world, or status and authority, will be so overwhelmed by these things that no act of worship, be it prayer or fasting, will be acceptable, except in very rare cases.

The remedy for love of this world is to break the worldly desires of the self, ending its greed for this world and purifying it in preparation for the next world. This will then become the state of the heart and sincere devotion will become easier to attain. There are a great many actions where a man acts, thinking they are purely intended for Allah's pleasure, but he is deluded, for he fails to see the defects in them.

It has been related that a man was used to praying in the first row in the mosque. One day he was late for the prayer, so he prayed in the second row. Feeling embarrassment when people saw him in the second row, he realized that the pleasure and satisfaction of the heart that he used to gain from praying in the first row were due to his seeing people seeing him there and admiring him for it. This is a subtle and intangible condition and actions are rarely safe from it. Apart from those whom Allah has assisted, few are aware of such delicate matters. Those who do not realize it only come to see their good deeds appearing as bad ones on the Day of Resurrection; they are the ones referred to in Allah's words:

"And something will come to them from Allah which they had never anticipated, for the evil of their deeds will become apparent to them. (39:47-48)"

And also:

"Say: Shall We tell you who will lose most in respect of their deeds? Those whose efforts were astray in the life of this world, while they thought that they were doing good works." (18:103-104)

Yaqub said: "A devout person is someone who conceals things that are good, in the same way that he conceals things that are bad."

As-Sousi said: "True devotion is to lose the faculty of being conscious of your devotion; for someone who identifies devotion in his devotion is a person whose devotion is in need of devotion."

To contemplate devotion is to admire it, and admiration is an affliction; and that which is pure is whatever is free of all afflictions. This means that one's deeds should be purified from any self-admiration concerning the actions they entail.

Ayyub said: "It is much harder for the people of action to purify their intentions than it is to execute any of their actions."

Some people have said: "To be devout for a short while is to survive for ever, but devotion is rare."

Suhail was asked: "What is the most difficult thing for the self? He said: "Devotion, when the self does not have the good fortune of being endowed with it."

Al-Fudayl said: "Forsaking action for the sake of other people is to seek their admiration. To act for the sake of their admiration is to associate others with Allah. Devotion is when Allah frees you from both of these states.



THE NATURE OF INTENTION

The intention of a person is not restricted to his utterance of the words, "I intend to do so and so." It is an overflowing from the heart which runs like conquests inspired by Allah. At times it is made easy, at other times, difficult. A person whose heart is overwhelmingly righteous finds it easy to summon good intentions at most times. Such a person has a heart generally inclined to the roots of goodness which, most of the time, blossom into the manifestation of good actions. As for those whose hearts incline towards and are overwhelmed by worldly matters, they find this difficult to accomplish and even obligatory acts of worship may become difficult and tiresome.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

"Actions are only by intention, and every man shall only have what he intended. Thus he whose hijrah was for Allah and was for Allah and His Messenger, his hijrah was for Allah and His Messenger, and he whose hijrah was to achieve some worldly benefit or to take some woman in marriage, his hijra was for that for which he made hijra. " [AL-BUKHARI and MUSLIM]

Imam ash-Shaf'i said: "This hadith is a third of all knowledge." The words, "actions are only by intention", mean that deeds which are performed in accordance with the sunnah are only acceptable and rewarded if the intentions behind them were sincere. It is like the saying of the Prophet, ﷺ "Actions depend upon their outcome." [AL-BUKHARI, Kitaab Al-Qadar, 11/499]

Likewise, the words, "every man shall only have what he intended", mean that the reward for an action depends upon the intention behind it. After stating this principle, the Prophet saws gave examples of it by , "thus he the Prophet [SAL] gave examples of it by saying, "Thus he whose hijrah was for Allah and His Messenger, his hijrah was for Allah and His Messenger, and he whose hijrah was to achieve

some worldly benefit or to take some woman in marriage, his hijrah was for that for which he made hijrah." So deeds which are apparently identical may differ, because the intentions behind them are different in degrees of goodness and badness, from one person to another.

Good intentions do not change the nature of forbidden actions. The ignorant should not misconstrue the meaning of the hadith and think that good intentions could turn forbidden actions into acceptable ones. The above saying of the Prophet [SAL] specifically relates to acts of worship and permissible actions, not to forbidden ones.

Worship and permissible actions can be turned into forbidden ones because of the intentions behind them, and permissible actions can become either good or bad deeds by intention; but wrong actions cannot become acts of worship, even with good intentions. This is illustrated in a hadith recorded by Imam Muslim in his Sahih, in which it is related on the authority of Abu Dharr that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "You will receive the reward for sadaqa even when you have sexual intercourse with your wives."

The sahaba said, "Will we really be rewarded for satisfying our physical desires?" He replied, "If you have haram intercourse, you will be committing a sin; similarly, if you have halal intercourse, you will be rewarded."

Imam an-Nawawi said, "This hadith clearly shows that permissible actions become acts of obedience if there is a good intention behind them; sexual intercourse becomes an act of worship if it is accompanied by any one of the following good intentions: keeping company with your wife in kindness, as Allah Ta'ala has commanded; hoping to have, as a result of intercourse, good and righteous offsping; guarding your chastity and that of your wife; helping to prevent haram lustful glances or thoughts, or haram intercourse; and any other good intention."

When bad intentions are accompanied by flaws in the actions themselves, then their gravity and punishment are multiplied. Any praiseworthy act must be rooted in sound intentions; only then could it be deemed worthy of reward. The fundamental principle should be that the act is intended for the worship of Allah alone. If our intention is to show off, then these same acts of worship will in fact become acts of disobedience.

As for permissible deeds, they all involve intentions -- which can potentially turn them into excellent acts which bring a man nearer to Allah and confer on him the gift of closeness to Him.

THE EXCELLENCE OF INTENTION

'Umar Ibn al-Khattaab, may Allah be pleased with him, said: "The best acts are doing what Allah has commanded, staying for away from what Allah has forbidden, and having sincere intentions towards what-ever Allah has required of us." This is stated by Imam An-Nawawi in TAH-DHIIB AL-ASMAA. It is also stated that Abu Ishaaq Ash-Shirazi once entered the Masjid to get something to eat, as was his custom, and then realized that he had dropped a dinar. He retraced his steps and found a dinar lying on the ground. But then he left it where it was, saying, "Perhaps it is not mine; perhaps it belongs to someone else."

Some of our predecessors said: "Many small actions are made great by the intentions behind them. Many great actions, on the other hand, are made small because the intentions behind them are lacking."

Yahya Ibn Abu Kathiir said: "Learn about intentions, for their importance is greater than the importance of actions."



THE EXCELLENCE OF KNOWLEDGE AND TEACHING

There are many proofs in the Qur'an concerning the excellence of knowledge and its tranmission. Allah, the Mighty and Glorious, says:

"Allah will raise up to high ranks those of you who believe and those who have been given knowledge." (58:11)

And also:

"Are those who know equal to those who do not know?" (39:9)

Also , in the Hadith, the Prophet ﷺ says, "When Allah desires good for someone, He gives him understanding of the Deen." [AL-BUKHARI and MUSLIM] He ﷺ also said, "Allah makes the way to the Garden easy for whoever treads a path in search of knowledge." [IMAM MUSLIM, 21/17]

Travelling on the path to knowledge refers both to walking along an actual pathway, such as going on foot to the assemblies of the ulama', as well as to following a metaphysical road, such as studying and memorizing.

The above saying of the Prophet ﷺ probably means that Allah makes learning the useful knowledge that is sought after easier for the seeker, clearing the way for him and smoothing his journey. Some of our predecessors used to say: "Is there anyone seeking knowledge, so that we can assist him in finding it?"

This hadith also alludes to the road leading to the Garden on the Day of Judgement, which is the straight path and to what precedes it and what comes after it.

Knowledge is also the shortest path to Allah. Whoever travels the road of knowledge reaches Allah and the Garden by the shortest route. Knowledge also clears the way out of

darkness, ignorance, doubt and skepticism. This is why Allah called His Book, "Light".

Al-Bukhari and Muslim have reported on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Umar that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Truly, Allah will not take away knowledge by snatching it away from people, but by taking away the lives of the people of knowledge one by one until none of them survive. Then the people will adopt ignorant ones as their leaders. They will be asked to deliver judgements and they will give them without knowledge, with the result that they will go astray and lead others astray."

When 'Ubadah ibn as-Samit was asked about this hadith he said: If you want, I will tell you what the highest knowledge is, which raises people in rank: it is humility."

He said this because there are two types of knowledge. The first produces its fruit in the heart. It is knowledge of Allah, the Exalted - His Names, His Attributes, and His Acts - which commands fear, respect, exaltation, love, supplication and reliance on Him. This is the beneficial type of knowledge. As ibn Mas'ud said: "they will recite the Qur'an, but it will not go beyond their throats. The Qur'an is only beneficial when it reaches the heart and is firmly planted in it."

Al-Hasan said: "There are two kinds of knowledge: Firstly, knowledge of the tongue, which can be a case against the son of Adam, as is mentioned in the hadith of the Prophet ﷺ :

"The Qur'an is either a case for you or a case against you". [Muslim, Kitaab At-Taharah].

Secondly, knowledge of the heart, which is beneficial knowledge. The second kind is the beneficial kind which raises people in rank; it is the inner knowledge which is

absorbed by the heart and puts it right. The knowledge that is on the tongue is taken lightly by people: neither those who possess it, nor anyone else, act upon it, and then it vanishes when its owners vanish on the Day of Judgement, when creation will be brought to account."



THE TYPES OF HEART

Just as the heart may be described in terms of being alive or dead, it may also be regarded as belonging to one of three types; these are the healthy heart, the dead heart, and the sick heart.

THE HEALTHY HEART

On the Day of Resurrection, only those who come to Allah with a healthy heart will be saved. Allah says:

"The day on which neither wealth nor sons will be of any use, except for whoever brings to Allah a sound heart. (26:88-89)"

In defining the healthy heart, the following has been said: "It is a heart cleansed from any passion that challenges what Allah commands, or disputes what He forbids. It is free from any impulses which contradict His good. As a result, it is safeguarded against the worship of anything other than Him, and seeks the judgement of no other except that of His Messenger ﷺ . Its services are exclusively reserved for Allah, willingly and lovingly, with total reliance, relating all matterto Him, in fear, hope and sincere dedication. When it loves, its love is in the way of Allah. If it detests, it detests in the light of what He detests. When it gives, it gives for Allah. If it withholds, it withholds for Allah. Nevertheless, all this will not suffice for its salvation until it is free from following, or taking as its guide, anyone other than His Messenger ﷺ."

A servant with a healthy heart must dedicate it to its journey's end and not base his actions and speech on those of any other person except Allah's Messenger ﷺ. He must not give precedence to any other faith or words or deeds over those of Allah and His Messenger, ﷺ. Allah says:

"Oh you who believe, do not put yourselves above Allah and His Messenger, but fear Allah, for Allah is Hearing, Knowing. (49:1)"

THE DEAD HEART

This is the opposite of the healthy heart. It does not know its Lord and does not worship Him as He commands, in the way which He likes, and with which He is pleased. It clings instead to its lusts and desires, even if these are likely to incur Allah's displeasure and wrath. It worships things other than Allah, and its loves and its hatreds, and its giving and its withholding, arise from its whims, which are of paramount importance to it and preferred above the pleasure of Allah. Its whims are its imam. Its lust is its guide. Its ignorance is its leader. Its crude impulses are its impetus. It is immersed in its concern with worldly objectives. It is drunk with its own fancies and its love for hasty, fleeting pleasures. It is called to Allah and the Aakhira from a distance but it does not respond to advice, and instead it follows any scheming, cunning shaytan. Life angers and pleases it, and passion makes it deaf and blind to anything except what is evil.

It has been related on the authority of Abu'd-Darda' that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Your love for something that makes you blind and deaf." [Abu Daw'ud, al-Adab, 14/ 38; Ahmad, al-Musnad, 5/194. The hadith is classified as HASAN.]

To associate and keep company with the owner of such a heart is to tempt illness: living with him is like taking poison, and befriending him means utter destruction.

THE SICK HEART

This is a heart with life in it, as well as illness. The former sustains it at one moment, the latter at another, and it follows whichever one of the two manages to dominate it. It has love for Allah, faith in Him, sincerity towards Him, and reliance upon Him, and these are what give it life. It also has a craving for lust and pleasure, and prefers them and strives to experience them. It is full of self-admiration,

which can lead to its own destruction. It listens to two callers: one calling it to Allah and His Prophet ﷺ and the Aakhira; and the other calling it to the fleeting pleasures of this world. It responds to whichever one of the two happens to have most influence over it at the time.

The first heart is alive, submitted to Allah, humble, sensitive and aware; the second is brittle and dead; the third wavers between either its safety or its ruin.

